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ABSTRACT

This digest presents a technique and activities for using Spanish language ads and public service announcements in the Spanish foreign language classroom. The technique has been used successfully with students in the Galveston-Houston, Texas area. Segments of the scripts of one announcement and one commercial advertisement are provided, as well as steps for using the segments. (VWL)

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Digest

January 1994

Spanish-Language Ads and Public Service Announcements in the Foreign Language Classroom

(EDO-FL-94-04)

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Videotaped clips of public service announcements and commercials from Spanish language television can provide interesting material for students to work with in the Spanish foreign language classroom. In addition, the use of such videotaped segments is inexpensive, does not involve the hassles of working with copyrighted material, and the only classroom material required is a videocassette player. The instructor simply tapes the announcement from a local Spanish television channel at home and replays it in class. In most regions of the country, it is possible to do this without buying expensive video programs and satellite dishes. At present, Spanish language television is accessible throughout the Sun Belt from California to Florida, including the entire Gulf South, as well as in many northern cities. For example, in the Galveston-Houston, Texas area there are three different Spanish language channels.

This technique has been used successfully in secondary school classrooms in the Galveston-Houston school districts and has been received enthusiastically by participating students. The scripts of videotaped segments from one public service announcement and one commercial are provided below along with accompanying exercises.

Script of a One-Minute Public Service Announcement

"Las drogas son una pesadilla. ¡Piénsalo! Asociación Pro-America Libre de Drogas. Univisión. Sirviendo a la comunidad hispana."
(Drugs are a nightmare. Think about it! Society for a Drug-Free America. Univision. Serving the Hispanic community.)

Steps for Using the Segment

1. The instructor plays the tape segment three times. The first time the students just listen. The second and third times the tape is replayed, the students jot down any words or sentence fragments that they understood or think they understood.

2. The instructor writes vocabulary from the public service announcement on the chalkboard under the following headers: nouns (nombres), adjectives (adjetivos), verbs (verbos), object pronouns (complemento directo), and prepositions (preposiciones).

nombres: *las drogas, una pesadilla, asociación, Univisión, la comunidad*
adjetivos: *pro-America, libre de drogas*
verbos: *son* (tercera persona singular del presente indicativo de ser); *¡piénsalo!* (imperativo familiar singular de pensar con complemento directo lo); *sirviendo* (gerundio del infinitivo servir)
complemento directo: *lo*
preposiciones: *a*

3. The instructor explains any problem words or expressions.
4. The instructor plays the tape segment two more times.
5. The instructor initiates a question-and-answer period using the following three oral exercises and replaying the tape segment after each exercise: a. true/false. b. sentence completion. c. direct questions.

True/False

1. Las drogas son una pesadilla.
2. El imperativo escrito al final del segmento dice "¡piénsalo!"
3. El segmento sobre drogas es un anuncio comercial.
4. Univisión está sirviendo a la comunidad Americana.
5. El nombre de un grupo antidrogas que vimos en el segmento fue "Asociación Pro-America Libre de Drogas."

Sentences for the Students to Complete Orally

1. Las drogas son . . .
2. El imperativo escrito al final del segmento dice . . .
3. El segmento sobre drogas es un anuncio . . .
4. Univisión está sirviendo a la . . .
5. El nombre del grupo antidrogas que vimos en el segmento fue. . .

Direct Questions

1. "¿Qué son las drogas?"
Answer: "Una pesadilla" or "Son una pesadilla."
2. "¿Qué dice el imperativo escrito al final del segmento?"
Answer: "¡Piénsalo!"
3. "¿Es un anuncio comercial o no comercial?"
Answer: "No comercial."
4. "¿Quién paga por este anuncio?"
Answer: "Univisión."
5. "¿A quién está sirviendo Univisión?"
Answer: "A la comunidad."
6. "¿A la comunidad Americana o hispana?"
Answer: "A la hispana."
7. "¿Cómo se llama la asociación anti-drogas cuyo nombre vimos en el segmento?"
Answer: "Asociación Pro-America Libre de Drogas."
8. "¿Cómo sería su nombre en inglés?"
Answer: "Society for a Drug-Free America."

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The oral testing format can be converted easily into a written quiz in which the instructor may add an exercise involving a brief summary. For example, students could be asked to write a memorandum containing five ideas or facts taken directly from the public service announcement. Possible written answers could be:

"Las drogas son una pesadilla."

"Univisión está sirviendo a la comunidad hispana."

"El grupo anti-drogas se llama Asociación Pro-America Libre de Drogas."

Dramatization in Class

People are influenced by and learn from what they watch on television. One use of video clips from Spanish language television is to encourage students to act out what they see. Following is an example of a dramatization based on the same public service announcement with several students participating:

El malo: "Oye, chica, ¿quieres coca?"

El coro: "Las drogas son una pesadilla. ¡Piénsalo!"

La chica: "¡Déjame en paz!"

Script of a Commercial Ad

Los doctores están de acuerdo en que la aspirina es lo mejor para aliviar el dolor. Y ahora tenemos uno de los mayores descubrimientos de la ciencia-ASPIRUB-La aspirina líquida que liquida el dolor. Más directo y más rápido porque se absorbe friccionando directamente el área del dolor. Sin el inconveniente de pasar por el estómago. Para el dolor aliviar, nada hay que tomar, sólo frotar. ASPIRUB. La aspirina líquida que liquida el dolor.
(Doctors agree that aspirin is the best pain reliever. And now we have one of the greatest scientific discoveries--ASPIRUB--the liquid aspirin that liquidates pain. More direct and faster because it is absorbed into the painful area through rubbing. Without the stomach upset associated with aspirin taken orally. To get rid of your ache, there's nothing you have to take--just rub it. ASPIRUB. The liquid aspirin that liquidates pain.)

Steps for Using the Segment

1. As with the public service announcement, the instructor plays the tape segment of this commercial three times. The first time the students just listen, the second and third times they write down words and phrases that they have understood. The instructor may have to help if students have omitted some words.

2. The instructor, with the help of the students, classifies the words on the chalkboard under the headings of *nombres, adjetivos, pronombres, adverbios, preposiciones, conjunciones, artículo neutro, verbos.*

3. The instructor explains any problem words or constructions.

4. The instructor replays the tape segment two more times.

5. The instructor initiates the question-and-answer phase using, as with the public service announcement, the three oral exercises: true/false; sentence completion; direct questions. A few select examples from the three exercises follow:

True/False

1. Lo mejor para aliviar el dolor es la aspirina.
2. "Aspirub" es una aspirina líquida.
3. "Aspirub" liquida el dolor.
4. "Aspirub" es más directo y más rápido que la aspirina en píldora o sólida.
5. "Aspirub" pasa por el estómago.

Sentences for Students to Complete Orally

1. "Aspirub" es una aspirina . . .
2. "Aspirub" liquida . . .
3. "Aspirub" es mejor que la aspirina normal porque es más . . .
4. "Aspirub" no tiene el inconveniente de pasar por . . .
5. Para aliviar el dolor con "Aspirub" no hay que tomar nada sino sólo . . .

Direct Questions

1. "¿Quiénes están de acuerdo en que la aspirina es lo mejor para aliviar el dolor?"
Answer: "Los doctores."
2. "¿Qué liquida Aspirub?"
Answer: "El dolor."
3. "¿Qué tipo de aspirina es Aspirub?"
Answer: "Líquida."
4. "El Aspirub se absorbe friccionando directamente ¿a qué parte del cuerpo?"
Answer: "El área del dolor."
5. "¿Qué hace el Aspirub?"
Answer: "Liquida el dolor."

Conclusion

These are just two examples of copyright-free television materials in Spanish that can be easily adapted for use in the Spanish foreign language classroom. These activities encourage students to develop listening comprehension skills by providing exposure to authentic Spanish listening material, focusing on vocabulary development, and enabling students to practice their oral language skills.

Other television segments in Spanish that have been used successfully in the classroom and have been received enthusiastically by students are long-distance telephone commercials and government-produced AIDS prevention announcements.

For Further Reading

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